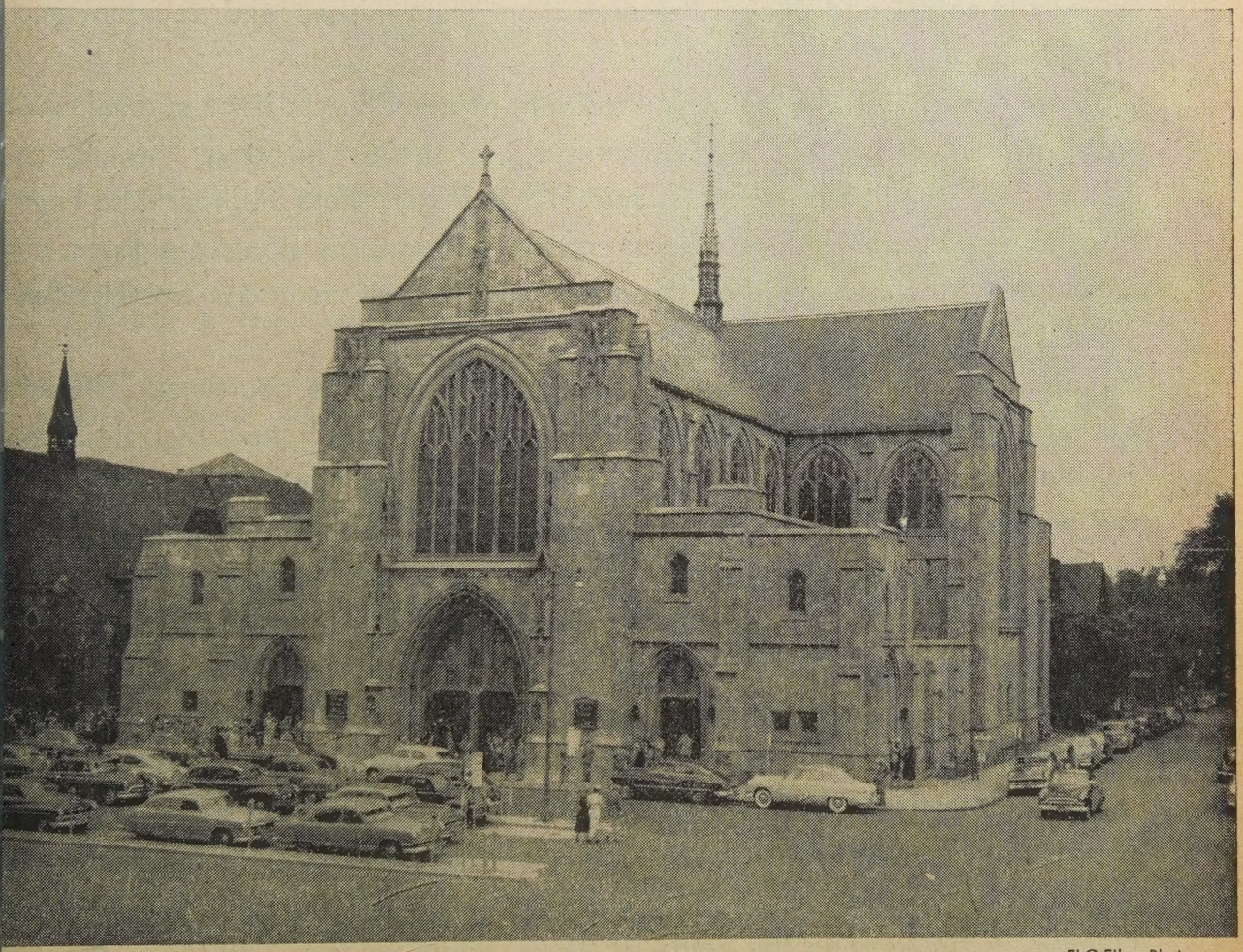
Lutheran Herald

Scene of the Church's General Convention



ELC Films Photo

ured above is Central Lutheran Church in Minneapolis, Fourth and Grant Street, where the General Convention he ELC will be held, beginning June 9. Added to its facilities since the last convention is a new, large parish house.

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LUME XXXVIII MINNEAPOLIS, MINN., JUNE 8, 1954 NUMBER 23

Prayer for a Good Convention

LOVING GOD, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ and our Father: As the convention of The Evangelical Lutheran Church is about to begin, we its members come to Thee asking Thy blessing; praying for the presence of the great Bishop of the Church, Jesus Christ; beseeching Thee for the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Keep Thy protecting hand over those who travel to this meeting. Let them journey in safety and peace. Preserve them from mishap and accident and danger.

Give strength to the beloved President of our Church. Let a special benediction rest upon him as he now presides for the last time over the Church he has served all these years so faithfully and well. Bless all those who have special responsibilities to perform: committee members, board members, officers, and executives; and all those who are to lead us in our worship day by day.

Let those whose voice and vote shall determine the course our Church shall take in the years ahead be constantly mindful of their responsibility to Thee and to the entire Church. Keep everything that is offensive from our words and actions. When we speak, let it be as in Thy presence; when we act, let it be wisely and prudently, with vision and hope and trust.

Thou hast granted us to live in a day of great opportunities for reaching men with the Gospel. Doors open before us as never before. Forbid, O God, that indifference, or slothfulness, or timidity on our part should be a barrier to the free course of Thy saving Word and Thy blessed Sacraments.

So we commit our Church—its members young and old; its pastors, teachers, evangelists, and missionaries; its officers and officials—to Thy guidance and protection. Grant us all to be obedient to Thy will. Honor us by using us. Humble us by exalting the name of Jesus, whom we love and serve. Amen.

LUTHERAN HERALD • **O. G. MALMIN, Editor** • **GLADYS WOGEN, Assistant to the Editor** • **HERMAN E. JORGENSEN, News Ed**

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nneapolis, Minn., June 8, 1954

Lutheran Herald

he Monastery, cademy, and Camp

Loren Halvorson

of these are at Loccum, Germany, a small town far from Hannover. The message of Easter has been claimed here for hundreds of years and still contin- to confront the world to this day. This is the drama the monastery, the academy, and the camp. The nastery is a familiar landmark with its lofty Gothic e rising above the tile roofs of Loccum as a silent ıbol of a Christian mission which has been here for rly 800 years. The monastery now is part of the heran Church of Hannover, the only Lutheran onastery" in the world; but instead of monks, it is v inhabited by students who here complete the last rs of their theological training.

o this day there remain the rigorous study and with- wal into solitude which characterized the medieval ırch emphasis on meditation and spiritual discipline. ese young men, however, do not remain in the mon- ery. After two years they go out to face the busy dern world as pastors of the Lutheran Church. Once n dedicated their entire lives here to seclusion and otion. In those past centuries great cathedrals were lt by men who lived in an age when all of life found universal meaning in the Church. In every vocation gion was a powerful element. Today, however, the dern world has largely discarded its Christian foun- ions and broken from its old traditions. The old ırches and monasteries are for many merely interest- places listed in their tourist books to be seen for ir cultural value. For many the Church today is ıbolized by such relics of a past age. Here in Loccum, wever, there are also other signs of the Church no ger as an ancient institution, but as a living force claiming the message of Easter a world whose situation is desper- because it has tried to exist apart m its Creator.

short distance from the monastery

Chapel of the nearly 800 year old monastery

are a group of new buildings of the Evangelical Academy. Here are no enclosed walls nor lofty heights, but large, modern windows viewing the monastery whose heritage in the Christian faith the Academy shares, but whose view at the same time is open to the world with all of its problems and needs. The Evangelical Academy is also part of the Hannover Lutheran Church, with the task of being a place of encounter between the Church and the world.

There are fifteen such academies in Germany today, providing opportunities for men and women from all vocations to come together for three to five days of conferences dealing with their common problems. The people who come are largely outside of the Church and often do not speak nor understand its language, but with the others of their own profession they can share

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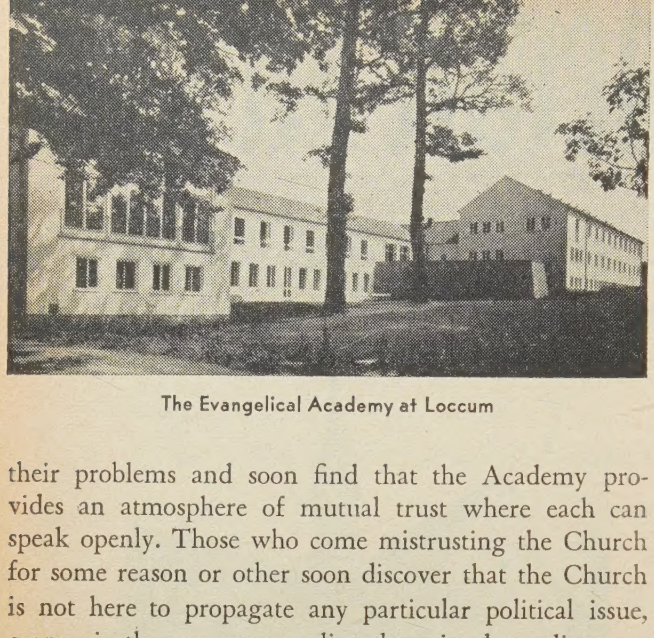


The Evangelical Academy at Loccum

their problems and soon find that the Academy provides an atmosphere of mutual trust where each can speak openly. Those who come mistrusting the Church for some reason or other soon discover that the Church is not here to propagate any particular political issue, economic theory, or party line, but simply to listen to people who are confused and discouraged in the modern world and help them to see that basically their problems are spiritual. The discussions inevitably lead to basic religious problems where the Church has a unique opportunity to bear witness to its Lord. The same opportunity also exists in the Bible studies and devotional services which are a part of every program.

In Loccum the conferences range in size from 60 to 130 persons. These groups are usually mixed, since the men are always encouraged to bring their wives. The meetings are led by one of the two pastors who are directors of the Academy, and the topics cover nearly every area of German life. Recently there have been conferences for industrialists dealing with their responsibility as employers, for government officials on the political development since 1945, for representatives of the press on the Berlin Conference, for former army officers on the issue of a new German army, and for young laborers. During Holy Week there was a special week of meditation led by Bishop Hanns Lilje.

The speakers for these conferences are chosen from an increasing circle of Christian laymen who are leaders in their own fields and who through the seven years of the Academy's history have been enlisted to assist in this important work. There is the famous physicist from Gottingen, the editor from Hamburg, the government official from Bonn, the historian from Heidelberg, and many others. In this work the Church finds itself today, as it did centuries ago, in the center of men's lives, listening to people discussing basic problems which they cannot solve alone. Often it is not easy to listen to nor to answer the questions arising from our plicated life, but the Church of Christ need not this task, for in its hands has been placed the me of the Risen Lord. The thousands of people who here each year do not find the Church hiding be monastery walls, but in the midst of their problems fronting them with the only answer to life—life God in Jesus Christ.

But there is another and a not so encouraging a of this picture of Loccum. Outside of town a distance lie another group of buildings. These a cluster of dirty brown barracks where newly ar refugees from the East Zone live. This reminder o divided world is also a part of Loccum. These refu came to the West seeking a new way of life in f and freedom. They came because they had been p ised a better way of life. But after months of crow camp life and unemployment, they become disappoi and often bitter. These refugees and the visitors f the East Zone who come to the Academy pose an escapable question to the Christian Church. Our hi standard of living has not convinced them that therefore necessarily have a better way of life. T discover as much faith in material things here as t is back on the other side of the Iron Curtain. T sober questions cannot be pushed lightly aside nor our position be too easily defended, for the basic p lem of our day is neither a military nor an econo one—it is a spiritual one. Their question is directe the Church.

The Monastery, the Academy, the Camp—the Ch of the past, the Church in the modern world, and world's question to the Church—all of these were of the picture at Loccum this Easter when Bishop I came for the festival service. It is significant tha came, not to speak in the stately monastery chu nor in the modern assembly room of the Academy, rather in the dining hall of the refugee camp with army blankets for a backdrop and a simple table an altar. The congregation on this morning consi of the youth who were attending a conference at Academy and the refugees. Here the Bishop of Hannover Church and president of the Lutheran W Federation came to men in their needs with the mess of the Risen Christ.

What happened this Easter at Loccum is only par the drama of the living Church which must procl the Gospel if it is to remain faithful to its Great C mission. To men and women in Loccum came message, "The Church of Christ has come to us. H arisen."

ehind the Bamboo Curtain

R. A. Syrdal

: urgent desire of all missions is to peer behind the nboo Curtain in China to see what is taking place e. Speaking in generalities, we can say that there two manifestations of church life. The one is a ırch that has sold itself by full compliance to the nmunist government and has become its agency. : other is the Church living in defiance of forces : demand compliance and compromises, sometimes lly, sometimes underground. We have pictures of ı of these types of churches, received recently.

ME HAVE BOWED THE KNEE

ım the April 1 issue of the *New Church Magazine,* ch is edited by Ch'en Chien Hsun, formerly editor he *Lutheran Weekly,* we have a letter written by Rev. Kuo Ching of Junan, Honan, China. Both e individuals are well known to our missionaries ɔ have worked in China, and it is rather interesting have this letter (translated by the Rev. Thomas). It reveals something of the situation within the ırch of China when that Church has fallen under nmunist control. The letter follows:

Fellow Believer X X:

Have received your letter and thank you for your cern for our studies here. I shall report all below: In regard your questions our studies have followed general line under the leadership of the Executive nch of the All Circles Council of the County Gov- ment. We have been engaged in these studies for r three months. Having completed this section of the dies, the men and women of our local congregation e received a profound and impressive enlightenment. reover, all of us were brought to the realization of superb and happy socialistic ideology of our Mother- d. This Socialism is not an idealistic dream of the tant future. It is an hourly experience as we march ward in our toil.

We have, therefore, made a step forward as our nking has been elevated. All of us have come to this olve: that, in this period of realistic increased pro- ction, we go forward with and assist our Motherland flourish.

During the government's 'Planned Purchase and nned Sale of Cereals' [In the U. S. A. we would ak of it as the rationing of foods.—Lee] the Church manifested a sincere love for their country. A case point is fellow-believer Chin Lan Fang. [Miss Chin graduate of Kiangwan Bible School, and has served Bible Woman for nearly thirty years.—Lee.] She ot in storage for herself two hundred and sixteen 6) chin of wheat. [One chin equals about twenty ounces—Lee.] She had stored this grain to save it for herself, for she is ill. [yu tien mao ping.] But when she came to the realization of the country's industrial development, she sold [surrendered—Lee] the whole supply of wheat, and voluntarily decided to eat the coarser cereals. [The Church has been actively campaigning to convince the populace that they should not eat fine wheat flour or polished rice, but should instead eat the coarser grains—millet, kaoliang, soy bean and barley—Lee.] A large number of her fellow-believers were so deeply moved by this fervent example of love for one's country that they decided to fully support the political position of their country. Together, they sold to the government thirteen hundred and eighty (1380) chin of wheat.

"The situation of the Church in the eastern part of Junan County under the blessing of God is good. The numbers of those studying the doctrines are increasing. Each congregation has about one hundred people (100), the most one hundred forty (140), the least about sixty (60). At present we do need studies in the Catechism [Wen Ta Hsueh Hsi.]

(signed) "Rev. Kuo Ch'ing"

OTHERS FIGHT ON

This letter indicates the Communist captivity of the Church wherein that government controls the Church and directs its activities to further the Communist cause. As such it supports those pastors politically who have surrendered themselves to the government program, and tries to undermine the influence of all pastors and other Christian workers who have refused to bow to the government dictates. In the March 15 issue of *Tien Feng,* which is a government-approved and supported church paper, a letter is printed attempting to discredit Chiang Ch'eng-en, a traveling evangelist in central China who has been very successful in rekindling the faith of individuals and re-establishing congregations that have been disrupted by war and political opposition. It urges that the pastors—evidently those who are approved by the government—should be accorded more honor. The letter closes by reminding the leaders that they must not abuse the freedom of religious belief that the government has guaranteed them. A very interesting incident taking place in reference to this letter is that there were groups in central China that publicly burned copies of the *Tien Feng* that attacked these evangelists. This shows a great deal of daring and would seem to indicate that there is a fairly large segment of the Church that does not go along with the policy of the "Government Committee on Church Reform."

Hsieh Chin, the official monthly magazine of the National Christian Council of China, has been under attack because it printed a list of Christian books recently published in China. Evidently a lot of these books were not approved by the Communist government, and the editor of the magazine is forced to come with a very abject apology for having mentioned these books in the magazine. The interesting aspect of this incident is the fact that these books have been published. It indicates that there are Christian groups somewhere in China free enough so that they have avoided the government surveillance to the point that they have been able to print books strongly condemned by the Communist government. All these incidents are straws in the wind which show that the Church is struggling against Communist control and is effectively able to continue its spiritual program in some areas of China.

HONAN AND HUPEH

From our own mission field in Honan and Hupeh we have received news from Mrs. Palmer Anderson. I am quoting from this letter, not using names in every case, in order to protect the individuals concerned:

"A student here in the Colony, son of Pastor 'T,' formerly of Loshan, hears from his father quite regularly. Another son, in Tientsin attending a government university, goes to a Christian service each Sunday together with other students and a few of the professors. A daughter is attending school in Peking, and she reports going to Wang Ming-tao's services each Sunday. The church is not large enough to accommodate the crowds. Pastor 'T' is now living in his own home in the Junan district. He was able to conduct three days of meetings at Miaowan at Christmas time, when five men, seven women, and three children were baptized; seventeen men and forty-four women partook of the Lord's Supper. The congregation at Miaowan in the Junan area has regained the use of its chapel in payment of taxes.

"At Shangtsai, a Mr. 'Y,' formerly at the Bible school in Sinyang, had conducted a series of special meetings in which Pastor 'T' had participated. Pastor Kwo was still in Junan but seemingly not able to travel in the country or serve other places. Pastor Wei was still at Chengyang and free to conduct services. Pastor Nien was at Chumatien; Pastor Li at Suiping with Miss Tung (formerly at the Bible School) assisting him. At Sinyang during Christmas, Pastor T'an (formerly of the Bible school) baptized five persons. It was not known whether the service was conducted in the church or not. Pastor Wu Ying conducted a similar service at Min Chiang, baptizing a number of people there.

"Folks here receive letters from workers in Shanghai and Canton. Mr. and Mrs. Gould and Miss Willis of Shanghai report that there are an estimated 50,000 ple attending services there. During 1952, $10,000 of Bibles and Scripture portions was sold at the House."

You will note that Pastor Wang Ming-tao is tioned in the above report. Since this report was w we have received telegraphic information that Ming-tao was executed at Peking as a reactionary tor Wang was a powerful evangelical preacher refused to bow to the dictates of the Communist ernment that would force him to compromise Christian message. From another source we learned that thirty pastors from one area in China called in for investigation. They were given a choi two things: going along with the government or preaching again. Two men accepted this choice. other twenty-eight were taken out and shot.

LIFE UNDER COMMUNISM

In reference to the picture of Communism in C I would like to recommend a book that is just of press, written by Quentin K. Y. Huang, a bishop o Anglican Church in China. The book is entitled, *I Can Tell.* This book is a well-balanced narrativ the experience that the bishop had as he spent 79 in a Communist prison before being released. Wit rancor and without an undue spirit of crusading gives the story of his arrest, his imprisonment and re in direct, unvarnished narrative, analyzing the C munist policy and activities in China as he proc with the story, closing with a chapter analyzing C munist land reforms in China. The closing paragr of the narrative of his experiences gives something the spirit of the entire book and of the man who written it:

"Only by faith, I was able to pull through phy sufferings and mental tortures of those seventy-nine in jail; by faith, I was enabled to see and resist s a tempting offer from the dialectical and diabol 'devil'; by faith, I had courage to escape when God vided the means of transportation; by faith, I cam this great land of liberty and democracy with my fam and, above all, by faith in God, I came to realize it was my duty to tell, through my own experien and insight, what Applied Communism actually is, contrast to the sweet 'theoretical' Communism, w fond hopes and fervent prayers that you, as the rea of this book, will not be fooled or deceived by the cle Communist propaganda and sweet promises, and that you may learn the lessons of life, but not in hard way—as I have learned them, at the hands of Devil! By God I am spared! To God I dedicate my again!"

I thank God for this book. It is the type of boo

hoped would come out from the experiences some ie men in Communist prisons have endured. I have disappointed in the accounts I have read to date, this one, demonstrating the calm Christian faith of the author, the ability of faith to overcome, gives also a calm analysis and draws sound conclusions from the events that take place and the incidents he endures and witnesses.

our Non-Resident Members

Conrad M. Thompson
Director of Evangelism

vas midnight. The darkness of the churchyard was ten only by a few moonbeams which intermittently te through the trees and reflected upon the rows of bstones. A cemetery at midnight, of all places, uld be quiet, for the dead do not walk again in this But the pastor heard a commotion of some kind ing from the far corner of the cemetery. Walking tle closer he heard voices. A grave was being dug. s he approached the scene, even his wildest and most eme imaginations could not have guessed the reason a burial, without a funeral, without a pastor, and nidnight. Neither can you.

he grave was being dug for one of those individuals o hadn't kept up his membership in his old home rch. With the right of membership and regular ment of dues went the privilege of burial. There no other way to be buried next to kin except for tives to smuggle the body in at night. It sounds tastic and extreme, and it is. But it is one of the ny problems to be faced when thinking of non-resit members.

hat It Does to the Soul

an accurate record could be taken of non-resident mbers (people who have moved to a new community still retain church membership in their former mmunity), the figure would be shocking. The result- tragedy is often the death of the soul. People who in their membership back "in the old home church" usually not much concerned about the church where y live. Irregular attendance, decreasing stewardship, l spiritual indifference are bound to develop. They do sense any responsibility to the church in the new nmunity and, though they may think otherwise, they of very little value to the church back home. Some y "pay dues" to their church back home, but in most es these are mere pittances barely covering cemetery vileges.

When our church members fail to transfer their mbership, it often reveals something about their ritual concern and convictions. They have little or conception as to what constitutes the true Church. ey think of it only as a building where there is an joining cemetery instead of, if they are Christians, holding membership in the "invisible Church" and belonging to the Communion of Saints. If they fully sensed this relationship, that of belonging to the Body of Christ, what would be the difference whether their names were on the membership roster of a church in Minnesota, California, or Madagascar? Some say they cannot transfer because of the love they have for the old home church and because they have kin buried in the church cemetery. When I transferred my membership from my home church I don't think I lost a bit of love for that church, nor did I cease to be sentimental about my brothers who lie buried in the adjoining cemetery.

Too often an unwillingness to transfer serves us as a smoke screen whereby people think they can escape their obligations to God in the giving of their lives—their time, talents, and money. Just as a fur coat stored in southern Minnesota would be of no value to one living in Canada, so Christian people should have their memberships where they live and work, even if it be a year, two, or ten. A transfer is much easier to move than a trunk. Many a person's soul is lost to Jesus Christ because he failed to relate himself to a church in his new community.

The Home Churches' Part

I was told of a family which many years ago moved West. They did not want to transfer their membership, and the church in northern Minnesota did not want to release them. Neighbors told me of their increasing spiritual lethargy as the years wore on. Twenty-five years had gone by without their being anything but occasional "church tramps." They had raised a family outside the Church, and the results were as expected—sin, shame, and disobedience running rampant, and now in their adulthood, broken homes and remarriages.

Who is responsible, we ask? Most people would say, the family itself. This may be true, but so is the "old home church" responsible. How could it expect to minister to the family's lack of church interest 2,000 miles away? How could it stand beside them in their troubles, sicknesses and sorrows? Yet, as members of the congregation, the obligation to shepherd that family in the name of Jesus Christ was still theirs. A distance

of many miles cannot erase our responsibilities as a Christian Church. Non-resident members are still the spiritual responsibility of the home church.

If our congregations will realize their God-given commission to serve *every member* on their rolls, whether resident or non-resident, there will be more anxiety to give the responsibility of their non-resident members to the congregations in the communities where they live and encourage them to transfer their memberships.

Some Things to Do

(1) The pastor and a member of the Board of Deacons are urged to call on the family before they leave and encourage them to request a letter of transfer soon after moving.

(2) Advise the family that you are sending members' names to a Lutheran pastor in the new community.

(3) Conduct a "Service of Godspeed" for the family at a Sunday morning worship service. (See Lutheran Evangelism Council literature.)

(4) Send a letter to the pastor in the new community giving all pertinent information concerning the family's interest in the Lord and His Church.

(5) Soon after the family moves write a letter reiterating the necessity for a permanent church home and urging the family to request a letter of transfer.

(6) If, after six months no action is taken, send another friendly letter and advise (some churches are following this procedure) that their names are being put on the inactive list.

(7) If the family's membership is bound by cemetery rights, seek to make the cemetery association a separate organization in itself and not related to *church* membership. Burial privileges can be retained by membership in the cemetery association.

(8) If repeated requests fail to bring about a transfer, continue to minister to the family through monthly mailings of the parish paper, tracts, and printed sermons.

(9) Non-resident members refusing to transfer should be constantly reminded of their spiritual and financial responsibility to their home church. Sometimes a request for a large donation to a building fund will speed a transfer like nothing else.

(10) Ministers who receive the information concerning the family should consider it a sacred trust and should minister to the family immediately.

(11) If the location of the family in a large city is vague, send the address to the secretary's office for proper referral.

The local church, if it is to properly fulfill its ministry, is accountable to every non-resident member and cannot consider its responsibility fully met until everyone is happily associated with a church in his new community where his spiritual needs will be adequ met.

If each congregation will demonstrate a Chris concern for non-resident members, thousands each can be kept and won for Jesus Christ and His Ch *Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, in t the Holy Spirit has made you guardians, to fee Church of the Lord which He obtained with His blood* (Acts 20:28).

BROADCASTS FROM THE CONVENTION

WCAL, 770 kc. St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minne As far as is possible, convention proceedings will be b cast as scheduled below, in part by recording. In add each day's broadcasts will summarize other actions messages.

Wednesday, June 9
9:30-10:30 a.m.—Preview of convention program business
3:00-5:00 p.m.—President's Message—Dr. J. A. Aasga Election of General Officers

Thursday, June 10
9:30-10:00 a.m.—Stewardship Message and Report of Board of Trustees
10:00-10:30 a.m.—WMF Convention Report

Friday, June 11
9:30-10:30 a.m.—Joint Union Committee Report and vention action.

Saturday, June 12
9:30-10:30 a.m.—Higher Education Report—Dr. Or Dahl
Election of Seminary President and fessor

Sunday, June 13 (broadcast tentative)
8:15- 9:15 a.m.—Convention Service in Muskego Chu
2:30- 4:00 p.m.—Ordination Service
Installation of New President

Monday, June 14
9:30-10:30 a.m.—Dedication of New Building—Dr. Sel Berge and Dr. J. A. Aasgaard
Recognition of Dr. J. A. Aasgaard's s ice to the church

Tuesday, June 15
9:30-10:30 a.m.—Report on Public Relations, Televisi and Films—Rev. O. H. Hove and Robert E. A. Lee
Other Reports

Wednesday, June 16
9:30-10:30 a.m.—Home Mission Report—Dr. P. S. Dyb
Foreign Mission Report—Dr. Rolf Syr
Other Reports

Thursday, June 17
9:30-10:00 a.m.—Convention summary
10:00-10:30 a.m.—WMF Convention Report

If warranted, additional convention broadcasts will carried at 9:30 or 10:00 a.m. on Friday and Saturday, Ju 18 and 19.

ugsburg's Book Store Remodeled

NOW INCLUDES ECCLESIASTICAL ARTS AND MUSIC DEPARTMENTS

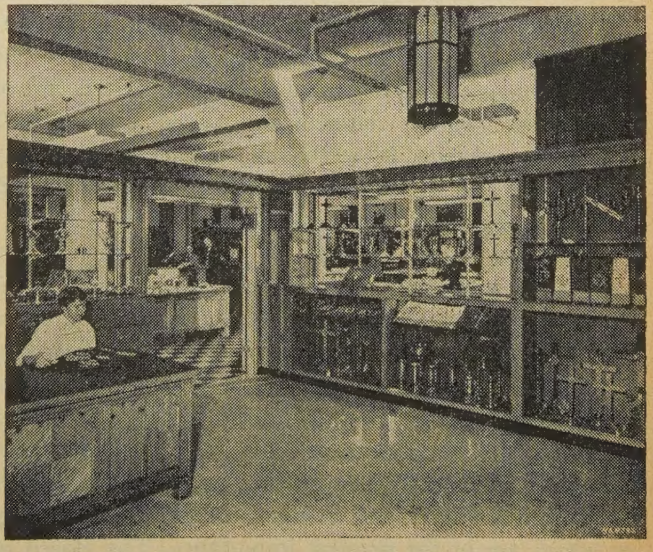
ce most of the offices of Augsburg Publishing House e been moved into the new ELC building at 426 th Fifth Street in Minneapolis, the Book Store facili- have been expanded. Pictured below are some of improvements.

Dedication of the new building and open house will be held on June 12, during the Biennial Convention. A book store will be set up in the basement of Central Lutheran Church and at the WMF convention in the Minneapolis Armory.

ICAL STAFF. Center, Carl Bersagel, store manager. Left to : Clara Boxrud, S. Rasmussen, Myrtle Peterson (Book Store). l Murbeck, Betty Forde (Ecclesiastical Arts). Ruth Olson, tine Hinderlie, Joyce Wintermute, Clara Anderson (Music). pictured are Clara Hodne and Ione Lehrke of the Book Store, Inga Lien of Ecclesiastical Arts.

BOOK STORE, facing Fourth Street. This view shows the re-arrangement of display counters and shelves to accommodate visitors more easily, with wrapping counters and cashier's desk moved to the center rear of the store for greater efficiency.

IC DEPARTMENT. This new location provides a sound-proofed l listening booth, as well as a piano room, more filing and space, and special counters for records and music literature. ooms at 408 South Fifth Street, formerly used by the music tment, are being converted into private offices.



ECCLESIASTICAL ARTS DEPARTMENT. This newest department of the store features chancel brassware, hangings, vestments, church lighting, and religious art. Another view of the room would show an altar erected to display dossal curtains, altar hangings, and altar brassware. Betty Forde looks over a book of emblems which can be ordered through this department.

The date of this issue is June 8, one day before the Twenty-First General Convention of The Evangelical Lutheran Church opens. A little "last minute" material can therefore be included here, with some assurance that it will be read before or during the convention. In addition to the following editorial remarks, special attention is called to the chart and article by Dr. Dybvig on the pages immediately following.

Once again we hope to be able to bring our readers the story of the convention with the least possible delay. Next week's issue will already be on the press when the convention opens. In the issue of June 22, however, it will be possible to give a great deal of information. Through the kind co-operation of the people in the shops at Augsburg Publishing House, a number of pages will be held open until the last possible hour. We hope to have the complete story of what transpires on the first two and one half days of the convention in that issue.

Our Most Crucial Convention

Several months ago we stated here that the 1954 convention would probably prove to be the most important in the history of our Church. We still believe that it will be just that. The three matters which were mentioned at that time loom as large or larger today: the election of a new president of the Church; the election of a new president of Luther Theological Seminary; and action on the *Report of the Joint Union Committee.*

It is to be hoped, however, that these "high priority" matters will not be permitted to usurp the concern of the convention to the exclusion of many, many other matters to be acted upon. It must not be forgotten that this is a "regular" convention of the Church; it must legislate in all matters concerning our work for the coming biennium. True, many of these matters are of a somewhat routine character and usually call for little or no floor debate. Nevertheless, they must be clearly understood and carefully considered by the delegates if action on them shall represent the will of the Church.

A hurried paging through the volume of reports and resolutions submitted by the various boards reveals that there are matters of great importance to be acted upon. The Church Council submits two resolutions regarding the administration of the colleges; it proposes passage of a statement on the Clergy Roster; it transmits reports from two special commissions, the one on Student Service and the one on the Diaconate. The Board of Trustees is recommending certain changes in regard to the Budget which are of the greatest importance. The Board of Charities has some special resolutions concerning the Red Wing Seminary property. From the Board of Pensions come several resolutions intimately affecting the pensioners of the Church, present and future.

EDIT

Just Be

Our point is that this would be a most imp convention quite apart from the three matters are being most widely discussed. When these othe ters are included, the whole thing does add up most crucial convention since 1917, when The gelical Lutheran Church was born.

Elections

The discussion of a new president of the Chur been carried on on a very high plane. There see be a prayerful seeking to know the will of God qualifications of possible candidates are being co tiously weighed, with most questions being asked this one or that one as a spiritual leader. One by-products of the discussion is that the Chu discovering that it has not a few men who seem qualified. When eight or ten names can be men time and again, all of them seemingly qualified t our Church, one cannot but conclude that Go blessed us richly with men of character and abili

The same is true of the discussion of candidat the presidency of the seminary. While the nomi machinery is different, in that the Church has lished a body which places one person in nomi (with the convention free, of course, to make add nominations from the floor), and while there are qualifications needed to fill this position which fe have, we yet have heard half a dozen men name certainly could fill the position well.

To us it adds up to this: The Evangelical Lu Church finds it necessary to fill its two highest po at the same convention—something which has happened before and probably never will again. It itself with a large number of qualified men. to be sure, delegates will come with "favorite" dates in mind and will vote for them with conv we are sure that when the Church has made its de everyone will be happy and satisfied and grate God. That, we submit, will be evidence that will has been done.

And Now the Merger

After all the editorials about the merger which appeared here, it may seem superfluous to say an further. Perhaps it is. One brother has told the that the large amount of editorial material whic appeared has discouraged others from writing. We

IALS

vention

is not the case. Our well-intentioned effort was to lyze and discuss the *Report* in order to stimulate ught and discussion throughout the Church. If the ult has been the opposite, we are very sorry. Never-ess, on the eve of the convention, we do have a additional remarks to make.

No one can doubt that an earnest effort has been forth to have the *Report* widely studied and dis-sed. Nine of the ten districts have had district-wide etings. In some districts merger discussion was a ture of regular district pastoral conferences; in others cial meetings were called. At most of the district-le meetings, laymen as well as pastors were present. have no idea how many circuit meetings have cussed the *Report;* we are quite sure that a majority the circuits have devoted some time to such a dis-sion. These meetings are still going on as this is tten. In addition, congregational groups, auxiliaries, l so on have had special meetings. The Brotherhood oted a large share of its national convention to the *port.*

Having attended a great many of these meetings at levels, it has seemed to us that the *Report* has been ll received. A surprisingly large number of those nding have purchased and carefully studied the *port;* still more have read with care the editorials l articles appearing in LUTHERAN HERALD. Discussion , as a rule, been spontaneous and general.

Some matters concerning the organizational structure ve come in for negative criticism, of course. Careful e has been taken of such objections in order that y may receive further study. How many of them l come up in the discussion on the convention floor do not know. Let it be remembered that Resolu-n III makes provision for listing objections to the *port,* with the request that further study be given by Joint Union Committee to the points in dispute. On whole, we believe that the organizational structure s been favorably received throughout the Church.

ree Frequent Questions

ree questions concerning the proposed merger have me up time and again in discussion meetings, matters hich are not in any way connected with the *Report,* t which are, nevertheless, perfectly in order when the der aspects of the merger are being considered. They e: (1) the relation of the new Church to the World Council of Churches; (2) sanctioned dancing at the colleges of the new Church; and (3) the general question, Why merge? Under Resolution II, all these may properly be discussed, since that resolution deals with the merger matter quite apart from organizational structure.

As far as the World Council is concerned, the *Report* states that both the ALC Committee and the ELC Committee have submitted statements. Since, however, only preliminary discussions have been held, no report or recommendation is submitted. What must be kept clearly in mind is that the new Church begins life with no commitments. If it is to remain outside the World Council, no action needs to be taken, since it will continue outside until it decides to enter. To be sure, it would be possible for each of the bodies to indicate its desire in the matter. We would be opposed to that procedure, in the first place because we do not believe it to be necessary; in the second place because it displays a distrust of one another which even calls in question the readiness of the bodies to merge. Our hope has been that no action would be taken of any kind. As an alternate, it might be possible to agree upon some time in the future when the new Church might vote whether or not to take the matter up. In any case, it is perfectly legitimate, under Resolution II, to discuss the entire subject at our convention.

The subject of dancing and other matters having to do with the Christian life are in a different category. Two years ago our Church adopted the *United Testimony on Faith and Life,* which deals adequately with the scriptural principles involved. To re-open that subject now appears to us to involve either dissatisfaction with the document adopted two years ago; or a departure from principle to incident. That is a very, very dangerous road to follow. It is the simple truth that in each of the four bodies there are situations which should not be. Shall we let our merger discussion degenerate into a comparison of things that ought not to be? If that actually is necessary, we do not believe the bodies are ready to merge. But if we trust one another, we must believe that the principles enunciated in the *United Testimony* will prevail. If one of the practices of one of the colleges in the ALC shall be subject to convention discussion, as was implied in an article in this paper some weeks ago, must we not in fairness at the same time discuss matters at our own colleges which we do not like, and such other matters as unionism and lodgism; and must we not then expect that the ALC shall air our shortcomings in its convention?

The Church Must Decide

The third question, "Why merge?" goes to the heart of Resolution II. In fact, that resolution is included for

(Continued on page 565)

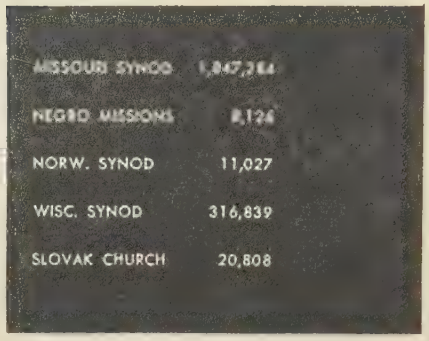
THE LUTHERAN FAMILY IN AMERICA

Before Merger

After Merger

SYNODICAL CONFERENCE

33.0%



MEMBERSHIP 2,204,084

MERGER GROUPS

27.1%

E.L.C.

MEMBERSHIP 907,124

A.L.C.

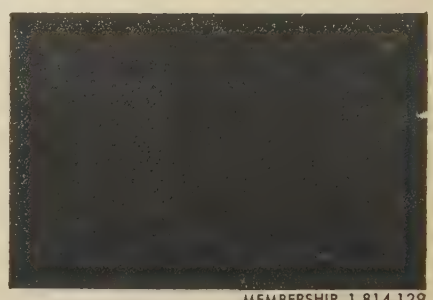
MEMBERSHIP 790,989

L.F.C.

MEMBERSHIP 64,376

U.E.L.C.

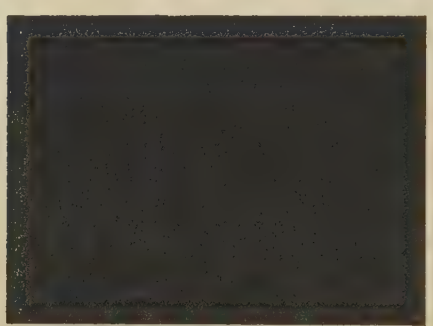
MEMBERSHIP 51,640

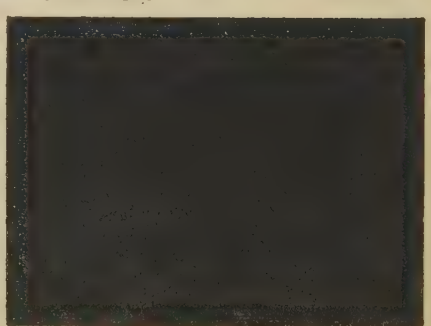


MEMBERSHIP 1,814,129

UNITED LUTHERAN CHURCH

31.3%





MEMBERSHIP 2,087,945

OTHER LUTHERAN BODIES

8.5%

AUG.

MEMBERSHIP 485,165

SUOMI

MEMBERSHIP 30,883

AM. EVANG.

MEMBERSHIP 20,434

FINNISH APOSTOLIC

MEMBERSHIP 16,293

NATIONAL EVANGELICAL

MEMBERSHIP 8,068

LUTHERAN BRETHREN

MEMBERSHIP 3,929

EIELSEN SYNOD

MEMBERSHIP 1,550

Prepared by Philip S. Dybvig

1952 STATISTICS

TOTAL 6,672,480

The Merger and the Lutheran Family

Philip S. Dybvig

ıe chart on the opposite page has been prepared to ɔw more clearly the relative sizes and groupings of ɛ Lutheran bodies in America and thus make the ɔposed merger more meaningful. There are 16 Lu-ɛran bodies today. If this seems like an excessive num-ɪr, bear in mind that the latest yearbook of American ıurches lists 11 Presbyterian bodies, 23 Baptist bodies, d 23 Methodist bodies. Furthermore, let it be borne mind that there were more than 57 varieties of Lu-ɛrans in America some years ago. Historians actually t the number some place between 65 and 85.

But the unity of any denominational group is not ɾealed by merely telling the number of bodies. To ɾ that there are 23 Methodist bodies in America would ggest that they are a highly divided group whereas ɛ big majority of all Methodists are now in one body. A study of the chart shows that the Lutheran picture not as divided as it might seem when we merely say ıt there are 16 bodies. Note that the four synods mprising the Synodical Conference are grouped to-ther because they do have close ties and maintain a stinct separation from the rest of us. Note too that ɛr the merger now proposed is consummated, all but ʃ per cent of the Lutherans will be in three main ɔups nearly equal in size. Study the group of smaller dies and you will discover that less than 2 per cent the Lutherans in America are to be found in the smallest Lutheran bodies, and three of these are no ger than some individual Lutheran congregations.

hat has caused the reduction in number of Lutheran dies from 65 to 16? The answer is mergers and more ɛrgers. Mergers and only mergers are the sure road ıding to the unity of the Lutheran Church. In the st, mergers came frequently. Several decades had two three mergers, and from Civil War days to the esent we have averaged one merger every six years. ɔviously, the mergers came closer together when the dies were smaller and more numerous. If the present ɛrger is consummated in 1957 (which would surely the earliest possible date) this present period will the longest period in a hundred years between mer-rs, namely, 27 years. Here again the outward fact ıds to misrepresent the true situation because these esent years have seen more of co-operation and under-ınding among the separate bodies than any other riod in the past.

But it still remains true that there has been no major erger since 1930, no single step to reduce the number Lutheran bodies. This is to some a most discourag-ing fact and is no doubt one reason why many are enthusiastic about the present merger.

We have placed the merger group between the other two larger groups because that is where we belong. This is true of us whether you consider doctrine, practice, or even geography. In reality the proposed merger is but a consolidation of the middle group of Lutherans, not in order to form a block against the other bodies as some have suggested, but rather to recognize that we do have much in common, and to help us make a greater contribution from our heritage to the total stream of Lutheran church life in America.

Through co-operation in the National Lutheran Council and also in the American Lutheran Conference, we have learned that we are so much alike in doctrine and practice that a merger will make it possible for us to conserve more fully and richly for future generations our great distinctive heritage and thus help us to contribute our best to the total Protestant Church in America. And we do have a contribution to make just as each of the other groups has much to give also. This is true of us most especially because we are a middle-of-the-road group of Lutherans both in theology and in practical churchmanship.

When we consider the history of the Lutheran Church in America and study the chart depicting the Lutheran family at the present time, it seems strange that this merger has been opposed by some on the ground that what they want is a merger of all Lutherans. The merger road in the past has led step by step to the present unity and the merger road is the only one that leads that way now. Perhaps the reason why it has been opposed is because in the opinion of some we are so close to the end of the road that we could just as well go all the way at once. This, however, is unrealistic because there is yet an attitude of critical aloofness on the part of a large section of the Lutheran Church over against the rest of us which makes complete unification of the Lutheran family impossible in the foreseeable future.

But this merger is definitely a step along the way and therefore gives much encouragement to those who hope for an eventual consolidation of all Lutherans in one body. No one knows whether that day will come or when it will come. Furthermore, there is a great possibility that the necessary organization for one body would be too cumbersome and unwieldy for effective work. In the meantime, we will through this proposed merger have a better working alignment of Lutheran bodies for the years that lie ahead. Surely it will be

a better working arrangement for the future to have over 90 per cent of the Lutherans in three main bodies of approximately equal size rather than to have the great disparity which is true at the present time. It may eventually lead to co-operation in the National Lutheran Council by Missouri Synod, which is to be desired.

One cannot study this chart without thinking of the fact that for many years Augustana has been in the American Lutheran Conference, co-operating with this middle group which is now planning to merge. If Augustana had not withdrawn from the negotiations, then this merger would have cleared up the Lutheran picture in America beautifully with over 98 per cent of all the Lutherans in three main bodies—one with 33 per cent and another with 31.3 per cent and the merger group with 34.3 per cent, leaving only 1.4 per cent for the group of smaller bodies.

Only the future knows what is to come. We have much evidence, however, that the Spirit of God has been working in the Lutheran family during the past years to correct and improve, so that there is increasing co-operation and understanding as the years go by. Under the guidance of the Spirit this may lead to such unity of doctrine, practice, and purpose that a future generation will rise up and say, "We want one Lutheran Church in America." Then people may look back upon this present merger and see that it was but another step along the way.

Unanswered Prayer

MILDRED OFFERLE

We feel that God has passed us by,
When we have prayed and been denied.
Yet, often in our childhood days
We found our wishes set aside,
When parents felt they were not wise;
For they had known—so God now knows—
What things would be the best for us,
And that was how they always chose.

Our God will never turn aside,
Unmindful of a child's request,
But in His love we must expect
That He gives only what is best.

The Friends of the Lord

Harold B. Ki

TRINITY SUNDAY
June 13, 1954
Text: John 15:12-17

Of all the names by which Christians have been c the name suggested by this text no doubt is most ex sive. To be a friend of the Lord is a high privilege

For the friends of the Lord there is no need to in fear. Friends are not slaves. Friends are not serv Friends enjoy the warmth of love and the joy of panionship. They share in happiness and sorrow with mutual understanding they bear the burden life. They may speak with one another and with w communicate encouragement and comfort, or in s meditation they may communicate deep feelings o heart. To be a friend of the Lord is a high privi for friends are chosen.

You see that, certainly. Natural men are not attra to Christ. The nature of man and the nature of Divine cannot be attractive to each other. By na man tends away from all that is good and right holy. And yet, the grace of Jesus Christ is outrea to all men. His choice is the choice of grace jus surely now as it was when He went resolutely to cross to accomplish the redemption of the world. His will that all men should be saved and come to knowledge of the truth. In Holy Baptism He chose In the ministry of His grace He chose you. In ministry of Holy Communion He chose you. He c you and He chooses you from day to day as His g is extended to you for the forgiveness of sins, for and salvation. To be a friend of the Lord is a privilege, for friends are co-workers.

To be a co-worker of the Lord is just another of saying that Christians are to bear fruit. You a friend; you are a co-worker for the purpose of Lord Himself, namely, to make more Christians. faith, if it shall live, must work the works of God. Father insists that men can be more than men, life can be more than twenty-four hours a day, the world itself can be a far better place, and that of earth can and must have citizenship in heave they shall know real life now and possess life ete

The friends of the Lord preface the day with pra and they close the day with prayer. They know (su you know) that prayer is the strength of holy endea Thus they pray, believing. They pray in high fidence, trusting the will of God for life as it is li

Of all the names by which Christians have called, this name, above all, is best: friends of Lord. What is your name? By what name are known? Are you now, by faith, a friend of the Lo Amen.

Meditations for the Family Altar

J. R. Hestenes

TOWARD THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

e Epistle: Romans 1:1-17

The Gospel: Luke 12:13-21

Monday, June 14
CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

Read Acts 4:32-35

Now the company of those who be-ved were of one heart and soul, and no e said that any of the things which he ssessed was his own, but they had erything in common.

The members of the early Church made attempt at communal living. They did is not because they wished to experi-nt with an idea, but because they were led with love. Their Christian faith as so great that it translated itself into ms of real sharing. In place of closing eir hands on their possessions and say-g, "This is mine," they opened their nds to one another and said, "This is urs."

In the political sense, communal living as never been a success, but in the Chris-an sense true sharing may go on, no atter what the form of government may . The child of God knows that all he is belongs to God. He knows that he ust use the things he has been entrusted ith to the glory of God. He must share ith others.

Help us to help one another, O God.

Tuesday, June 15
WHAT INFLUENCE?

Read Matthew 13:31-35

"The kingdom of heaven is like leaven which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened."

Every person in life exerts some kind of influence on those around him. Either this influence is good or it is bad. In the parable Jesus told, the leaven the woman added to the three measures of meal worked its way into all of it. It influenced its entire surroundings.

Each person should consider what sort of influence he is making on life. Starting with home, is it a better home because he is there? And the people he works with, and meets during the day, how are they influenced?

The desire of every Christian is that he should influence people toward Christ. And if the Spirit of Christ dwells in a person, that same Spirit will show itself in all contacts.

"Surely, this is a better world because he is here." That's the sort of remark made about a person who puts the leaven of Christian faith into the "meal" of life.

Wednesday, June 16
ALWAYS REMEMBER

Read Deuteronomy 6:4-13

"And these words . . . shall be upon your heart . . . you shall bind them as a sign upon your hand . . . you shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates."

In this way the Children of Israel were being impressed with what it means to know God and to have His love. They were to have reminders of it everywhere. They were to teach it to their children and to speak of it constantly.

It is well for everyone to have reminders of God. These serve to keep the reality of the unseen alive in a world where men are apt to live for things that are seen. Pictures and plaques on the wall, daily use of the Word and prayer serve to keep a person close to God. But besides these, it is possible to think about God at all times. "I do not believe there is a single moment in the whole day that God is not in my thoughts," said a Christian business man. He knew God, and his heart and mind and soul were filled with Him. We, too must always be remembering God.

Thursday, June 17
THE CHURCH

Read Acts 2:42-47

And they devoted themselves to the postles' teaching and fellowship, to the reaking of bread and the prayers.

It must have been a wonderful experi-nce to belong to the Church in the days f the Apostles. There was real fervor, ve, and joy. There was missionary zeal, nd "the Lord added to their number day y day those who were being saved." hurch was such a good thing that people ere anxious to come into its fellowship.

Long ago a man disappointed in his wn church wrote to an "expert" and sked what could be done to "put it back n its feet." Everything had been tried, e said. "Why don't you try religion?" ame the reply.

To this day, if the Church wishes to ave the same experience had by the early New Testament Church, it must abide by he same Word, the same Spirit, the same urpose that controlled them. Teaching nd fellowship; this the Church must have and offer to all. Let the Church be the Church. Let me help my Church be a true Church. I know the world needs it more than ever.

Friday, June 18
POWER OF THE WORD

Read Mark 4:26-29

"The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed upon the ground, and should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should sprout and grow, he knows not how."

According to this parable of Jesus, the more seed sown the more harvest there will be. And those are the directions to the Church. Sow the seed. God will cause it to sprout and grow. We cannot know all the deep mysteries of the working of the Spirit. But we can preach and teach the Word. God will use that, and there will be a harvest. Not everyone who hears or is taught will be in God's harvest, but there will be those with whom God was successful.

This truth is applied in all things. If we are praying for a friend who needs to come to God, there is a point beyond which we cannot go. If we have spoken to him and prayed for him, God must take it from there. And let us believe in the power of the Word. There is no greater power on earth. It accomplishes that which God sends it forth to do.

Saturday, June 19
A GREAT NAME

Read Genesis 12:1-4

"And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great so that you will be a blessing."

It was to a man named Abram that God came with a call to be His follower. In the course of events his name was changed to Abraham and, as the Lord said, his name became great. He is the father of the Old Testament faith.

A change in names from old to new, from common to great, from godless to godly is significant. With Jacob it was changed to Israel; with Saul it was changed to Paul. Greatness came with the new names.

A man appeared before a judge with the request that his name be changed. Asked why he wished to do this, he replied, "I am a converted man. I wish to break away from my past life and my past sins. I am living in an entirely new world; therefore, I wish to take a new name." His request was granted.

Every person who believes in Christ has a name that is great: Christian.

Praised be Thy Name, O Christ. Amen.

A New Venture in Faith

These pages are edited by Mrs. J. B. Huffman, General WMF Radio Chairman

WMF FUND FOR RELIGIOUS TELEVISION

Down the pages of Scripture marches the glorious word—"venture," as it goes hand in hand with faith. The Bible is indeed a record of the grandest venture under the sun. The executive board of the Women's Missionary Federation has stepped out on a new venture of faith, confident that every one of its members will co-operate whole-heartedly. In support of the expanding television program of our Church, they have established a WMF fund for religious television. This fund will be promoted in July at the local WMF meetings, when members will be given the opportunity to participate with their gifts.

For over twenty years radio broadcasting has been a part of the women's work of our Church, because we feel that we should accept and appropriate every instrument and implement which God offers as an aid for us. Television is a medium through which many other Churches are making a tremendous impact upon their listeners. Our Church has taken steps to meet this great challenge also. We have a television evangelist, the Rev. Norman Hammer of Northridge, California. Program production is under way. Pastor Hammer tells us, "There is no time like the present, when new stations are opening all over the country and when good programs are at a premium and wanted, to offer our program, 'It Happened to Me,' to the television stations. If we do not act now, the doors may be closed."

America is a semi-pagan nation, with millions of unchurched, most of whom live within the sound of church bells, and some within the very shadow of the church itself. Through radio programs we have brought many souls to Christ and His Church. It is to be expected that we may reach many more through the more than thirty million television sets in American homes today.

Never in the history of our nation has there been such a general feeling of despair, of futility, on the part of the people of every station of life. This is the golden day of opportunity for the Church to present a positive, dynamic message of grace and hope. If America is to be won for Christ, we must push out the walls of the Church —we must share Christ today—tomorrow may be too late.

How America Is Changing is the title of a series of illustrated advertisements appearing periodically in daily newspapers throughout the country. The series is being sponsored by the Institute of Life Insurance. Many of you may have been impressed by the picture of a family at worship—and even more so by the caption, "Americans are in the midst of a great renewal of religious interest." In support of this statement, the advertisement stated, "Since 1940, membership in religious congregations has increased by 27 million—over twice the rate of our p lation growth.

"During this period, thousand places of worship have been b There's been an increase of 40,000 tive clergymen.

"More Bibles were published betw 1940 and 1950 than in the prev 40 years. *The vast audiences of ligious radio and television progr also reflect our growing spiritual terests.*

"Although we Americans have m great gains in our material possessi it is the renewal of *spiritual* inte that adds meaning and significance these material gains.

"The stability of our families a homes, as well as the progress of nation, have their roots in moral a spiritual values. We in America h always enjoyed freedom of worsh and it is of tremendous importa that we are more actively using t opportunity."

Television in its present stage is effective means of reaching entire fa

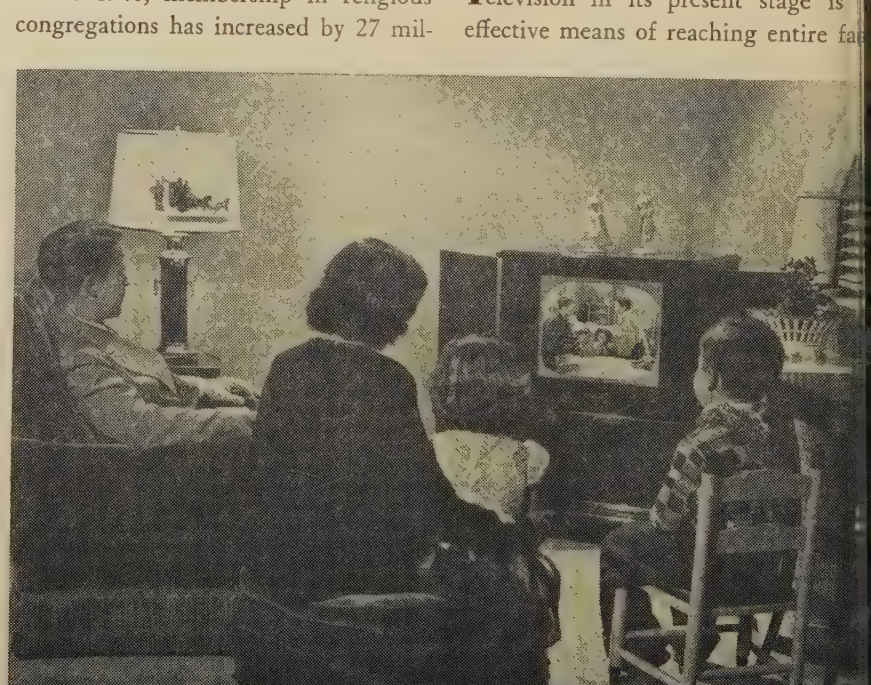


Photo by Harold M. Lambe

. The youth problem and the disgration of home and society in an areas is based on lack of Chrisity in homes. A judge who handled enile delinquency cases stated that per cent of the 6,000 cases that handled annually were the result Godless home environment. What allenge is given us! God can acplish great things through us if proceed humbly, asking for blessand guidance for producers, lisrs. We must have the vision of t He can do for us through this venture of ours. We are such a *fortable* people! But there is not h comfort in venture! We must be ng to take risks. We have begun erfully. In Jesus' name must all of work be done, and then, "Whater thy hand findeth to do, do it all thy might" (Eccl. 9:10). That e spirit of eagerness that we need e go forward. What a privilege is as members of the Women's Misary Federation to help in expandthis new program of our Church! s ask for God's grace to do it gladvillingly, and with all our might!

"IT HAPPENED TO ME"

The Christian Church and Christian people are ever seeking for effective ways to communicate their witness to Christ as their Lord and Savior. Almost everyone who has had the opportunity to become exposed to the miracle of television has been impressed by its marvelous power to convey information and change attitudes.

It is only reasonable that the Church, on behalf of the many Christians it represents, should attempt to harness this powerful force in contemporary communications. We are therefore pleased to report that the ELC now stands on the threshold of a tremendous opportunity to bear witness to Christ by way of television.

A fascinating and appealing program idea entitled *It Happened to Me* has been developed by the Division of Evangelism through the Reverend Norman Hammer, ELC television evangelist, with the Office of Public Relations responsible for production, promotion, and distribution of the proposed series. A pilot film in color has been produced as the initial step in what might well become an important television development.

In order that the people of our Church might have the opportunity to see it and determine for themselves whether it is worth their support, the Church's Brotherhood has assumed the project of arranging a church-wide projection of the pilot film in every parish of the ELC within the next few weeks.

It is encouraging to observe that the WMF, too, has recognized the tremendous potential of television by establishing a television fund. The WMF which pioneered significantly in the area of religious radio broadcasting in our Church, is to be genuinely commended for its vision in promoting the utilization also of the new medium of television. Through their television fund the women of the Church can express themselves in tangible, positive, and progressive terms.

Christian wives and mothers are in a strategic spot to relay their opinions and ideas about the Christian use of television so that the Church's ministry through this medium may be as effective as possible.

O. H. Hove
Director of Public Relations

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itorials

inued from page 559)

specific purpose of affording each body an opportunnow to review the entire merger question and decide ther to continue the negotiations or not. As we have ed repeatedly, we believe that such a resolution is ssary, lest we find ourselves carried along, step by into a merger without ever having faced, as a rch, the fundamental question of whether we be it to be God's will that our Church lose itself in larger fellowship. We trust that this subject will ully discussed before a vote is taken on Resolution And, may we add as our opinion, This should be a t vote.

That it all comes down to, obviously, is that *the rch must decide*. Under our constitutional proced- that decision is made by the convention, and by it e. If the convention says, "We shall continue," that nding; if the convention says, "We shall withdraw the negotiations," that settles it.

here is no disposition on the part of anyone to exert ue influence on the Church to enter the merger. While we are sure that few people feel that the leadership of the Church is attempting to rush us into a merger for which we are not ready, it has been stated that such is the case. We reply with all the earnestness at our command that there is absolutely no foundation in fact for such ill-considered statements. The leaders of the Church have tried to follow to the letter the mandates of succeeding conventions. Our Union Committee has leaned over backward in its effort to be completely objective. If it is true (as we believe it is) that the members of the Union Committee and the elected leaders of the Church favor the merger, that is a matter of sincere conviction. We repeat: There has not been, and is not now, any disposition on the part of anyone to foist this merger on the Church against its will.

We repeat: The Church must decide. All anyone can ask is that the matter shall be carefully studied, thoroughly discussed, prayerfully reviewed. The experience of many years of convention-going in The Evangelical Lutheran Church convinces us that the action taken in just a few days will be wise and Spirit-guided.

Correspondence

MERGER AND THE WORLD COUNCIL

►Working out a merger of four church bodies becomes a matter of give and take, in which each body seeks to preserve those special emphases for which it stands.

If the ELC presses for a dynamic and expanding program of Christian education in the merged Church, as Pastor Ofstedal so ably spells out in his letter to LUTHERAN HERALD in the May 18 issue, it will have made a real contribution to the merger cause.

However, if one can judge from his letter, it would seem equally clear that the ELC may not bring the same dynamic and positive approach to the problem of ecumenical relations, and that in this area we should rely on the leadership of our brethren in the American Lutheran Church and the United Evangelical Lutheran Church.

As Pastor Ofstedal points out, the ALC and the UELC are members of the World Council. If they have benefited from this membership and recommend that it be continued by the merged Church, should not their judgment prevail in this matter? After all, they have the experience and our Church does not.

I was on the staff of the World Council of Churches in Geneva, Switzerland, in 1948, and followed, through the HERALD, the arguments that were advanced at that time for not joining the World Council. I felt then that the fears expressed about what kind of agency the World Council is or would become were without foundation, and I believe the experience of the past six years validates this view.

Pastor Ofstedal implies that if the World Council "were simply a free association of Churches banded together for purposes of conferences of doctrine, for joint charitable enterprises, etc.," that he would be for it. Let me assure him that this is exactly what the World Council is. None of its member Churches has surrendered any of its sovereignty as a result of joining the World Council. Nor have the denominational lines been blurred in the World Council; if anything they are stronger today than they were six years ago. To be sure, it is hoped that some of the differences which divide Christian communions will be diminished through work and fellowship in the World Council. But is this an evil? However, I don't know of a single responsible World Council leader who is thinking in terms of one big Church. Unity, not union, is the object of the World Council.

Another criticism made by Pastor Ofstedal is that the World Council does not acknowledge the Scriptures in its creedal statement, which does, however, recognize Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. As I understand it, the Lutheran Church of Norway, under leadership of Bishop Berggrav (one of the World Council's presidents), is seeking to make this necessary correction at the World Council's second assembly in Evanston this summer. I would think that most, if not all, of the 37 Lutheran Church bodies (with 44 million Lutherans in their membership) which belong to the World Council would support this amendment, along with hosts of other Christians. Lutherans, incidentally, comprise about 28 per cent of the estimated 160 million Christians represented by the World Council's mem churches.

I believe the question of World Council membe is one that should be left for the merged Church to de Certainly the ELC at this year's convention should tak precipitous action that would forever bar the me Church from membership in a useful agency just b developed. Naturally, I hope when the merged Church make its decision it will be in favor of World Co membership, for I believe that isolationism, religiousl well as nationally, is outmoded. The ALC and the U will do us a great service if they constantly remind u that fact.

WILLMAR L. THORKELSON
Minneapolis, Minn.

SUGGESTED RESOLUTIONS

►The following resolutions have not gone through proper channels as yet, due in part to the fact that information and experience on which they are based not available in time. They are therefore submitted for sideration by letter rather than as an official conven communication. They may, of course, be altered or reje in passing through channels, but knowing the desir pastors and delegates for as much advance informatio possible, I take this means of submitting a potential of convention business.

I.

WHEREAS the Church at its 1952 Convention pl upon the General Secretary's office the responsibilit "taking immediate steps to ready the Church for the g est possible use of television"; (1952 Annual Report, 34)

AND WHEREAS a beginning has been made thro the Office of General Secretary and Public Relations co-operation with the Division of Evangelism, particu Pastor Norman Hammer, television evangelist, and with assistance of Brotherhood personnel;

AND WHEREAS the need and possibilities of telev in the program of the Church are greater than ever;

Therefore, Be It Resolved,

(a) That the initial efforts to comply with the resolution regarding television be approved;

(b) That support of television solicited through the sh ing of television films to congregations and by special be encouraged;

(c) That consideration be given to the inclusion of f for television in future budgets of the Church;

(d) That co-operation with other Lutheran Churche the area of television be further investigated;

(e) and That the Church Council, in consultation the Director of Public Relations, appoint an advisory c mission for television to formulate policy and assist in selection of key personnel.

II.

WHEREAS, radio and television have much in c mon with films, and together constitute an operation s ciently differentiated and potentially large enough to ju a specialized and separate development, as witnessed the experience of other churches;

Therefore, Be It Resolved,

(a) That the possibility of combining films with r

l television be considered by the Board of ELC Films l the Board of Trustees, with power to act.

b) That study be made by the Church Council and the ırd of Trustees as to the advisability and practicability :he future establishment of a department of broadcasting l films;

c) and, That it be suggested to the Joint Union Com- tee that study be given to the advisability of establish- a Division or Commission of Broadcasting and Films in proposed merged Church.

VHEREAS, there is need for uniformity in practice reporting membership statistics;

VHEREAS, on the one hand, the Church needs to rd against hasty action which practically excommuni- :s members from congregations and The Evangelical heran Church for convenience and not in accordance h scriptural grounds, and needs rather to develop a re patient and zealous shepherding viewpoint;

ND WHEREAS, on the other hand, some practical way is needed to deal with the problem of members who may have been inactive or absent for many years, in order that realistic membership figures may be attained;

Therefore, Be It Resolved, That pastors and congregations be urged to examine, and, if necessary, to revise constitutional provisions and congregational practices to the end that after five years of inactivity due to absence or other causes members may be omitted from current membership statistics (whether or not permanently removed from the rolls), inactivity for such length of time being presumed to be an indication of probable desire to withdraw from membership. Wherever possible, such members should be visited, or communicated by mail, before such action is taken.

O. H. Hove

The Correspondence page is intended to be an open forum for the use of our readers. The views expressed on this page are those of the writers, with which the editor may or may not agree. Brief letters on pertinent subjects are invited. It goes without saying that nothing contrary to the teaching of the church will be accepted.

Within the E.L.C.

SONS

he Rev. A. L. Abrahamson, Yank- S. Dak., has accepted a call to ime the presidency of Augustana demy, Canton, S. Dak., where he succeed the Rev. Samuel Carlsen, gned.

he Rev. Raymond M. Olson, ELC ctor of stewardship, was the speak- at commencement exercises held day evening, May 23, at Central heran Church, Minneapolis, for 66 lent nurses graduating from the view Hospital School of Nursing. he forenoon of the same day bac- ureate services were held at Beth- Church, Minneapolis, the sermon g preached by **the Rev. I. O. Kron-** , pastor loci.

. M. Knutzen, Burlington, Wash., nber of the board of Pacific Lu- an College, Parkland, Wash., was May 6 congratulated by the board his 80th birthday and thanked for s to the college aggregating more 1 $30,000. Rising to thank the rd for its action, Mr. Knutzen pro- led to pledge an additional sum of 000 to the college.

he Rev. O. M. Simundson, Fargo, Dak., began his pastorate of Im- uel Church, Plummer, Minn., e 1.

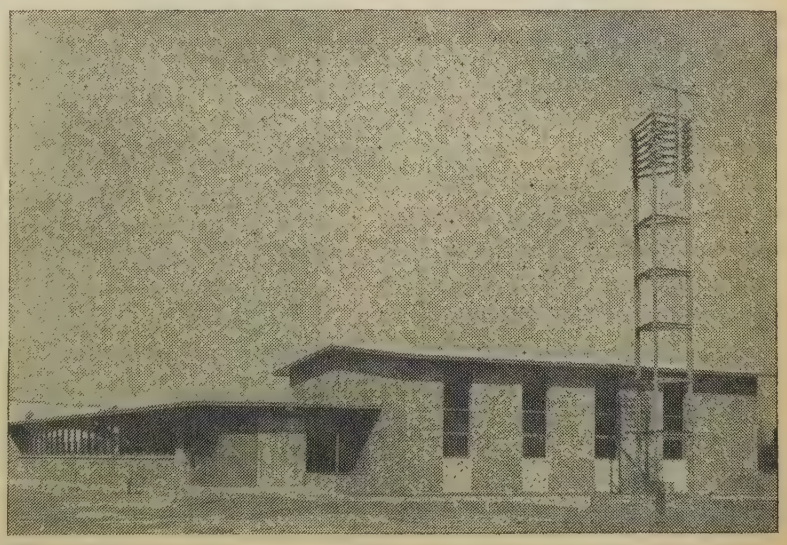
he Rev. Otis K. Odland, formerly or at Curtiss, Wis., was installed 23 as pastor of the Spring Prairie- risonville parish in Wisconsin by Rev. F. I. Schmidt, vice president he Eastern District. A week earlier **the Rev. C. G. Naeseth,** who has been serving this parish since 1919, preached his farewell sermons in the parish churches.

The Rev. H. B. Kildahl, Jr., pastor of Vinje Church, Willmar, Minn., since 1947, has accepted a call to First Lutheran Church, Minot, N. Dak.; he will begin this pastorate there late in August.

Dar Roa, former teacher at Augustana Academy, Canton, S. Dak., now ELC youth evangelist, has been awarded the Master of Arts degree by New York University for graduate work completed in conjunction with Biblical Seminary, New York. Mr. Roa's present address is YPLL Office, 422 S. Fifth St., Minneapolis 15, Minn.

The Rev. A. N. Solheim, Lake Alma, Sask., has accepted a call from the Lutheran Collegiate Institute, Outlook, Sask., to become its business manager and its dean of men. As dean he succeeds **Mr. G. Loken,** who will continue as principal of the institute's high school department.

NEW WEST TEXAS CHURCH DEDICATED



Pictured herewith is the new church building of Midland Lutheran Church, a congregation lately established in the city of Midland in western Texas. The new church was dedicated Sunday afternoon, April 25, by Dr. V. T. Jordahl, president of the South Central District. At the forenoon service the same day Dr. Jordahl installed the Rev. Erling Peterson as pastor of the parish, which, however, Pastor Peterson has virtually established through faithful work in Midland ever since last fall.

LARGE GROUP JOINS YOUNG AUSTIN CHURCH

The picture above shows some of the 127 new members who were received into membership Palm Sunday at the first service held by Our Saviour's Church, Austin, Minn., in its new house of worship. This congregation, served by the Rev. G. C. Knutson, was organized in September last year and has now 743 baptized members.

Miss Frida R. Nilsen, associate professor of English at Concordia College, Moorhead, Minn., has been awarded the Fredric Schafer fellowship by the American-Scandinavian Foundation for a year's study at the University of Oslo. She will sail for Norway in August.

The Rev. E. A. Fretheim, pastor at Ephraim, Wis., since 1946, has terminated his pastorate there. At present he is assisting his son Philip, pastor at Suttons Bay, Mich., and is ready to accept interim appointments.

The Rev. Jesse M. Runestad, pastor at Oklee, Minn., since 1947, died May 20. Obituary later.

DISTRICTS

Eastern

Muskegon, Mich. During the first four months of 1954 Immanuel Church, parish of the Rev. Richard L. Hansen received 67 new members, 21 of these by adult confirmation. The membership now totals 300.

Onalaska, Wis. The new church building of First Lutheran Church, parish of the Rev. Maynard Midthun, was dedicated Sunday afternoon, May 9, by District President Anderson. At the forenoon service the sermon was preached by Dr. C. O. Pederson, a former pastor of the congregation. Dedication festivities continued throughout the following week, terminating May 16, when the Rev. L. E. Reinertsen, South African missionary, preached.

Green Bay, Wis. Calvary Church, parish of the Rev. Arnold H. Andersen, a congregation organized last November, had its first unit church cated May 16 by Dr. Martin And president of the Eastern District. young church now has a membe of 255, a Sunday school of 113 and 13 teachers, and an active W The field of the congregation i Marquette Park section in the s western part of the city.

South Dakota

Harrisburg, S. Dak. The B Creek-Springfield parish, organize and one half years ago, had its pa age dedicated May 16 by District dent Pierson. The parsonage is of debt. Pastor of this parish i Rev. James W. Asp.

Canada

Swift Current, Sask. St. Olaf Ch parish of the Rev. Osborne H. C has recently completed a campaig raise funds for the erection of a n needed new church. The goal, s $45,000, was exceeded by $1,730, an additional $10,000 may be a sibility. Building operations will begin.

Spalding, Sask. Dovre Church, ish of the Rev. Sigmund Bue, m its church building into town

RURAL WISCONSIN CHURCH COMMEMORATES FOUNDING

North Valley Church, north of Centuria, Wis., celebrated its 75th anniversary Apr and also May 1-3. The festival speaker on the first-named date was Dr. J. A. Aasg president of The Evangelical Lutheran Church. Later speakers included two former pa of the parish: G. C. Strum and E. N. Okland, and also S. M. Tweeten and T Thompson, Jr. Dr. Aasgaard dedicated new altar paraments, an anniversary gift o Ladies Aid, which simultaneously celebrated its 70th anniversary. In the accompa picture are shown, left to right: Mrs. A. Prose, present Ladies Aid president; Mrs. Johnson, one of the oldest resident church members; Dr. Aasgaard; and the Rev. Midtling, present pastor of North Valley Church.

ORGAN DEDICATION AT LONG ISLAND CHURCH

above picture was taken at the recent dedication of a new Hammond organ at nity Church of Alden Terrace, Valley Stream, Long Island, N. Y., parish of the Rev. ng A. Nilssen. Dr. L. P. Qualben, president of the Atlantic Circuit, officiated at the dication. On Palm Sunday the church received 65 new members, 14 of them by adult nfirmation. Two weeks later Trinity Church was host to the Long Island Circuit YPLL, speaker being the Rev. Henry Nielsen of Teaneck, N. J. On May 15 the church launched ampaign to raise funds for the erection of a $150,000 Education Building, as its Sunday ool now has 525 pupils.

urs ago and has since improved it a eat deal.

Wetaskiwin, Alta. Bethel Church, rish of the Rev. A. R. Melsness, on lm Sunday received 19 new mem-rs, four of these by adult confirma-n.

uthern Minnesota

Minneapolis, Minn. In connection th the fiftieth anniversary festivities University Lutheran Church of ope, a reunion of former Hope Lu-eran basketball and baseball athletes s held on May 21. Speakers at this ther-Son banquet included the Rev. ben Mostrom, St. Paul; Lester Bol-d, University golf pro, who grew in Hope church; and John Kundla, nager of the Minneapolis Lakers.

DOUBLE DIAMOND ANNIVERSARY IN SOUTH DAKOTA PARISH

East Highland Church of the Brandt rish in South Dakota will celebrate 75th aniversary June 18-20, and ghland Church of the same parish ll celebrate its 75th anniversay June 27. Speakers at East Highland will lude the following former pastors the congregation: Johan Olsen, K. Hatlen, P. O. Lovseth, and H. G. Loddigs, and the following sons of the congregation: Pastors James Gronseth, G. O. Gronseth, and E. J. Lovseth. At Highland Church the following former pastors of the congregation will speak: Johan Olsen, K. B. Vaaler, S. M. Moe, E. O. Ellefson, A. E. Norson, and H. G. Loddigs. The celebrations will include reunions of confirmands and historic pageants. Present pastor of the Brandt parish is the Rev. Bennert O. Solberg.

CIRCUIT FEDERATION GRANTS FIRST SCHOLARSHIP AWARD

The first WMF scholarship award granted by the North Puget Sound Circuit WMF has gone to Beverly Jean Krampitz, who ranked second among the eighty recent graduates of the Burlington-Edison High School, Burlington, Wash. She is an active member of the Burlington Church, and will in the fall enter Pacific Lutheran College, Parkland, Wash., with the intention of eventually majoring in nursing.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

For Sale: Pews, altar, communion rail, church bell, and stained glass windows. Write the Rev. N. K. Estrem, Pelican Rapids, Minn.

For Sale: A round pulpit of oak, practically new, at $35.00. Write W. B. Schell, Pine Grove Lutheran Church, Roseau, Minn.

Wanted: Used copies of "Lutheran Hymnary," music or word edition. Write the Rev. J. R. Refsell, 623 Marquette Ave., South Milwaukee, Wis.

Minnesota Youth Temperance Council will hold its 18th annual encamp-

PTR RESULTS IN A GREEN BAY PARISH

Pictured above are 30 new members of Trinity Church, Green Bay, Wis., admitted April 25 by adult confirmation. The class was formed as a result of the Green Bay Circuit's Preaching-Teaching-Reaching conference held in February. In the group are eleven former Roman Catholics. Along with these thirty, 73 other new members were received. The Evangelism committee of the church has decided to make visitations in homes every month. Pastor of Trinity parish is the Rev. Cecil J. Tellekson.

ment, June 21-28, at the "Little Camp in the Hills," Medicine Lake, Minn., for persons over 13 years of age. Rate: $14.00.

Swift Current Circuit YPLL will meet June 4-6 at Frontier, Sask., Can.

For Sale: Forty copies of Lutheran Hymnary, in good condition. Write the Rev. E. S. Torvend, 127 Fairhaven Ave., Burlington, Wash.

The annual meeting of the Waldorf Lutheran College Association will be held at the College in Forest City, Iowa, at 2. p.m., Tuesday, July 13, 1954. G. W. Aasgaard, Secretary.

Visitors at 75th anniversary celebration of East Highland Church of the Brandt parish, South Dakota, June 18-20, should notify Mrs. Martin Larson, Astoria, S. Dak.; and visitors at 75th anniversary celebration of Highland Church, June 25-27, should notify Mr. Harold Jacobson, Brandt, S. Dak.

Beaver Bay Parish on Lake Superior North Shore invites tourists to the following Sunday services: At Our Saviour's, 11 miles north of Two Harbors, on Highway 61, at 9:30 a.m.; at Sychar, schoolhouse in Beaver Bay, 11:00 a.m.; at Zion, schoolhouse in Finland, highway 1, 7:30 a.m.

All former and present ELC military and VA chaplains will meet for breakfast Saturday, June 12, exact hour and place to be announced in the ELC convention bulletin.

Reunion of all former choir members of the University Lutheran Church of Hope, Minneapolis, at a fellowship supper Friday evening, June 11. Massed choir will also sing at 11:00 service June 13, University Lutheran Church of Hope.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS FOR PASTORS

C. M. Simundson, Plummer, Minnesota (6-1-54)

N. Astrup Larsen, 404 High St., Decorah, Iowa (5-28-54)

E. O. Midboe, 2633 16th St. N. W., Washington, D. C. (6-1-54)

Martinus E. Silseth, Tokyo Ordnance Depot APO 712, San Francisco, Calif. (5-14-54)

C. J. Swanson, St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minn. (9-1-54)

G. V. Sorensen, Montevideo, Minn. (8-1-54)

O. K. Odland, Morrisonville, Wis. (5-20-54)

J. Tanner, Richville, Minn. (5-17-54)

G. H. Nerison, Box 454, Wolford, N. Dak. (5-17-54)

N. B. Ursin, Wittenberg, Wis. (5-7-54)

Torger Thompson, Rushford, Minn. (9-1-54)

Chap. R. L. Combs, Chapel No. 3 Div. Arty., 82nd Abn. Div., Fort Bragg, N. C. (5-7-54)

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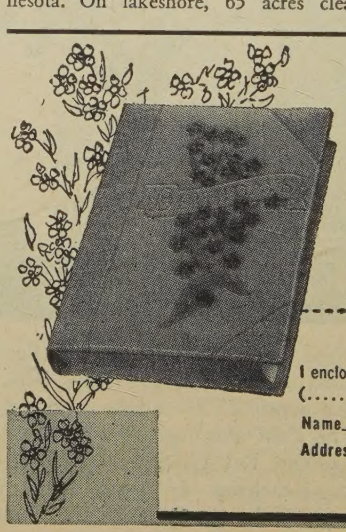
80 acre farm for sale in Beltrami Co., Minnesota. On lakeshore, 65 acres cleared, 48 acres under plow. Modern house; good and other buildings. Apple and plum orchard. Will sell with machinery and included. Owner selling. 36

For sale—120 acre dairy farm in St.



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, grade "A" milk house, other buildings.
0 acres tillable. 364-2A
For sale—trout farm, spring fed ponds, ex-
lent for minnows and trout. Nice trout
w in stock with complete dairy farm. 29
lstein cows, 8 heifers, and machinery.
nn County, Wisconsin. 364-3A
For sale—highly improved 240 acre farm,
d soil. Sargent Co., North Dakota. 3 miles
church; 1½ to school; REA and phone.
od highway, 6 miles to town. Solid Lu-
ran community. Particulars on request.
364-4A

omes

Modern house for sale in west Richfield,
urb of Minneapolis, Minnesota. Extra large
included. Some work, but a good bargain
$4,800. Terms. 364-5B
Modern home in Lutheran community, vil-
e of Elk Mound, Wisconsin, priced to
. Completely modern; 3 bedrooms; com-
te basement. Oil burning furnace, hot
ter heat. Double, plastered and painted
age, heated. Big lot and nice garden space.
cupancy immediately. 364-6B

sinesses

For sale—well established car and ma-
nery business in Barron County, Wisconsin.
ll sell either agency or both together. Build-
with nice show floor and shop, can be
ght or leased. Good farming and tourist
ion. Large active Lutheran congregation.
364-7C

WANTED TO RENT

Small apartment at moderate price needed
1 for young medical intern, wife, and
children. Interning at Ancker Hospital,
Paul. Prefer nearby location. 264-23B

FOR RENT

Cottage for rent at Preachers Point, on
te Kabekona, Minnesota. Write for further
rmation. 364-8B
Cottage for rent on Blackduck Lake, Minn.
ders the Blackduck Lutheran Bible Camp.
information and description write.
364-9B

POSITION WANTED

Woman with 10 years of organist experi-
e and degree from Pacific Lutheran Col-
e in music, desires position in Minneapolis
organist starting July 1. Also willing to
stitute during the summer months.
364-10D
9 year old college girl desires summer em-
yment at summer resort or summer camp.
perienced as waitress. Available June 12.
364-11D

HELP WANTED

outhern Minnesota congregation is in need
a parish worker to do visitation work and
direct parish education and youth activi-
Please state training, experience, and
rences in reply. 364-12F
Woman urgently needed in southern Min-
ota city, new modern home for general
sework and care of four children. Mother
hospital. Private room. About 50 miles
n Minneapolis. 364-13F
usiness woman with 3 young daughters
ies competent, responsible housekeeper.
time work. Southern Minnesota. 364-14F
Widower with 2 young children needs a
sekeeper. No objections to mother with
dren. Modern home in small town in
hern Minnesota. 364-15F

Lady wanted to care for bedridden patient and general housework. Location in town in Houston Co., Minnesota. Modern home. 2 adults. Prefer someone who desires to make it their home. Would consider couple. 364-16F

Registered Nurses—We operate 50 hospitals in 8 states and have attractive openings in new modern hospitals for superintendents, anesthetists, supervisors, surgical and general duty nurses. Excellent opportunity for advancement. When change of location is desired, transfer to one of our other hospitals can be arranged without loss of benefits. Good salaries, paid vacations, sick leave, Social Security. Also desirable openings for combination medical laboratory x-ray technicians with same benefits. 364-17F

Opening for music director, or choir director and organist, full or part time, effective August 1. Location Twin Cities. E.L.C. 364-18F

Urgently needed: Young or middle-aged couple as house parents for group of boys in ELC Children's Home. Good wages. Social Security, hospital and medical insurance, 5 day week. Must be in good health. Third person in cottage as assistant. Also needed: Mature, middle-aged lady as housemother for girls, preferably with teaching or family experience. Wisconsin. 364-19F

Wanted—a middle-aged man as custodian for Home for Aged. If married, wife may be employed as practical nurse or housekeeper on one section. Good living quarters and usual benefits. South Dakota. 364-20G

Bookkeeper wanted. Must be capable of taking charge of the office and books in southern Minnesota town business. Lutheran community. Will not tolerate a man with poor morals. 364-21G

Salesman wanted for furniture and appliances. Will be responsible for retail selling and store display along with another salesman. Mower County, Minnesota. town. Must have high moral standards. Lutheran community. 364-22G

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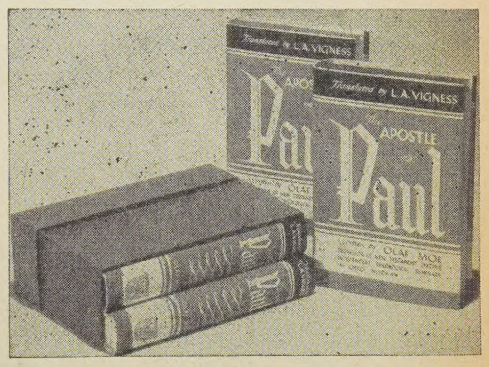

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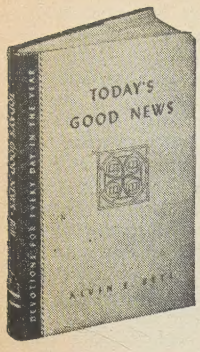

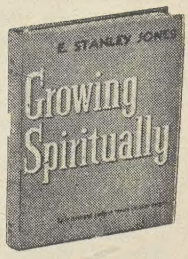

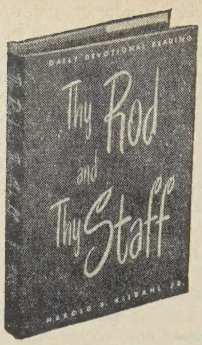

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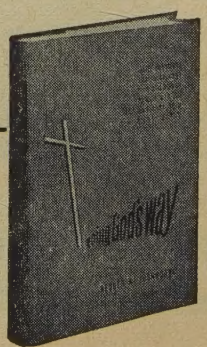

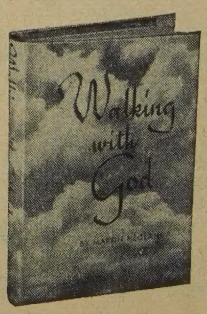

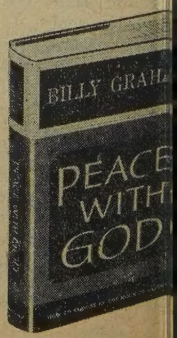

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